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SUBJECT: UN SRSG QAZI TRAVELS TO NEW YORK TO PUSH FOR
BAGHDAD PEACE INITIATIVE

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: In an April 30 meeting with the Ambassador, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Ashraf Qazi said that he is departing May 5 to travel to New York, to try and overcome initial resistance to a UNAMI-sponsored Baghdad Peace Initiative. Briefing the Ambassador on the program, Qazi asked for back-channel U.S. Embassy support for this effort. Qazi added that he is also planning a trip to the Gulf Region to garner support for Iraq. END SUMMARY

UNAMI-PROPOSED BAGHDAD PEACE INITIATIVE

12. (C) Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Ashraf Qazi met with the Ambassador on April 30 to discuss his planned May 5 trip to New York and to solicit U.S. Embassy support for a UNAMI-proposed Baghdad Peace Initiative. Qazi said that the purpose of his trip is to overcome UN leadership resistance to the peace initiative. He attributed this resistance to UN Secretariat concern that, if the initiative failed, it would reflect poorly on the overall UN effort in Iraq.

13. (C) Qazi told Ambassador that planning for the Peace Accord is still in the early stages. He said that a three-person drafting committee would meet as early as next week to consolidate ideas and come up with an initial proposal. This proposal would then be circulated to various political entities to solicit input and buy-in, including international support. After the government is formed and buy-in from key organizations and institutions obtained, the initiative would be formally launched with public fanfare. Qazi said he believes the accord would be very well received.

14. (C) Qazi said that the Iraqis involved in the project are very enthusiastic about the likely success of the initiative and that it would greatly contribute to the establishment of peace. Qazi asked that Embassy Baghdad quietly weigh in with support. Ambassador told Qazi that the initiative appears to be a good idea and that now may indeed be the right time to move forward with such an effort. Ambassador indicated he would inform Washington and USUN of the effort and do what he could to ensure UNAMI's success with the proposal.

QAZI ON THE ARAB LEAGUE AND IRBIL DONOR CONFERENCE

15. (C) Qazi told the Ambassador he is planning a trip to the Gulf States, in addition to his travel to New York, to solicit support for Iraq. He added that he is aware of

discussions to elicit Arab League support for the new government, perhaps in the form of a Cairo Conference-type event.

16. (C) Qazi also told Ambassador that he believes Prime Minister-designate Nuri Kamil al-Maliki likely is enjoying a "euphoria period" of goodwill and should have more leeway in forming a government than his predecessor. The government will need time to settle in but should be in place in time for the planned June donor conference in Irbil. Qazi said he believes holding this conference in Iraq is important, but he doubts any of the big players will attend due to security concerns.

COMMENT

17. (C) The genesis of the proposed Baghdad Peace Accord was a March 6-11 UN-sponsored study tour for Iraqi politicians to South Africa, where they learned of a similar initiative to address the problem of extra-governmental armed groups. Although the Baghdad Peace Accord is still in the early planning stages, it may be worth exploring as an element in a broader effort to encourage national reconciliation.
SATTERFIELD